

Forest Certification Green-Up Guidelines

7-12-06

Performance Measure 5.3. Program Participants shall adopt a green-up requirement or alternative methods that provide for visual quality.

Indicators:

1. Program implementing the green-up requirement or alternative methods.
2. Harvest area tracking system to demonstrate compliance with the green-up requirement or alternative methods.
3. Trees in clearcut harvest areas are at least 3 years old or 5 feet high at the desired level of stocking before adjacent areas are clearcut, or as appropriate to address operational and economic considerations, alternative methods to reach the performance measure are utilized by the Program Participant.

The purpose of this document is to:

- 1) Aid in the process for how to identify areas of potential Green-Up conflicts.
- 2) Present strategies for how to resolve these issues as they are discovered.

Identification of Potential Green-Up Conflicts

The SFI green-up standard applies specifically to clearcuts. Attention should be given to anything we prescribe for final harvest or seed tree. As a guide, a clearcut would be anything with 10 sq. ft. or less of merchantable basal area.

Use the tools and the steps below to recognize when a harvest may cause conflicts with Forest Certification green-up requirements.

Tools: There are interactive maps located within the IFMAP GDSE that can be accessed (with an IFMAP login) to identify potential areas that may cause green-up conflicts.

When do these checks occur?

Currently this is being implemented at the point of timber sale preparation, when paint is being applied to the trees. Item 5j of the Pre-Timber Sale Checklist insures that this is considered before the sale is sold. The below guidelines describe how analysis should be conducted during the inventory process to avoid potential conflicts during actual sale preparation:

IFMAP

FMU Pre-Inventory Meeting: An FMU analysis is to be conducted prior to the start-up of field inventory. The analysis should include a review of open and recently closed timber sale contracts located adjacent to or within the upcoming year-of-entry compartments where potential conflicts may potentially occur. This will be enabled by maps which will be provided by the FMFM Map shop that identifies open timber sale contracts that are final harvests or seed tree cuts. The maps will also identify closed timber sale contracts that were completed within three years of the year-of-entry.

There are four instances where compliance with the green up requirement can be verified. They are:

- 1) **Post Stage 1 Review (IFMAP Inventory Cycle):** This is the point where Areas Of Interest (AOI's) are being nominated. Before a treatment can be nominated, it becomes an AOI. There is a period (currently a minimum of 21 days) where the Stage 1 data can be analyzed and AOI's nominated. The IFMAP GDSE allows users to view their AOI's to see if there are possible impacts from adjacent treatments that are either being proposed (AOI's), have been approved (frozen OI or Treatment.lyr), or are active sales in the TSale database. Because this is statewide data, it is possible to view across compartment, as well as FMU and district boundaries, to check for conflicts. (For those compartments that are not in the IFMAP inventory cycle, refer to step 2 below.)
 - a. If an AOI is next to a recent or proposed clearcut, consider nominating another AOI as a possible substitute. If both AOI's meet our management objectives, then choose the AOI without the green-up conflict.
 - b. During Stage 2 field work, consider what management methods could be used to reduce the visual impact of the clearcut.
- 2) **Pre-Review (OI) / Post Stage 2 Analysis (IFMAP Inventory Cycle):** Under IFMAP inventory, this is the point where AOI's may become Draft Treatments. Another look at the green-up map for possible adjacency conflicts can be done at this point, prior to the development of the Draft Treatment boundary.
- 3) **Plan Of Work (POW) Stand List approval:** Prior to the beginning of the treatments being prepared during their YOE, Unit Inventory Leads (or Unit Managers) approve the stand list for their plan of work. At this point, Units should view the "slushy" data (see products above) in the green-up map to see if any adjacency issues have arisen since earlier analysis.
- 4) **Timber Sale Prep (checklist):** A final check of the green-up map is conducted at the time of timber sale prep to be sure that no recently approved sales (new inventory, Chapter 7 additions, etc.) will cause conflicts. This step should be done by those responsible for the timber sale prep, as well as the TMS's who review the proposal prescription for conformance with the inventory prescription and conformance with the green-up requirement.

OPERATIONS INVENTORY

There are two key instances where analysis should be conducted to see if potential conflicts with the green-up requirement exist. They are:

FMU Pre-Inventory Meeting: An FMU analysis is to be conducted prior to the start-up of field inventory. The analysis should include a review of open and recently closed timber sale contracts located adjacent to or within the upcoming year-of-entry compartments where potential conflicts may potentially occur. This will be enabled by maps which will be provided by the FMFM Map shop that identifies open timber sale contracts that are final harvests or seed tree cuts. The maps will also identify closed timber sale contracts that were completed within three years of the year-of-entry.

Timber Sale Prep (checklist): A final check of the green-up map is conducted at the time of timber sale prep to ensure no recently approved sales (new inventory, Chapter 7 additions, etc.) will cause conflicts. This step should be done by those responsible for the timber sale prep, as well as the TMS's who review the proposal prescription for conformance with the inventory prescription and conformance with the green-up requirement.

Resolution of Green-Up Conflicts

Compliance to the SFI green-up performance measure is not meant to change our management strategy or decrease our acres treated. Its purpose is to help minimize the visual impact of clearcuts. The performance measure is not a totally inflexible rule. Alternative measures can be implemented with adequate justification. This justification must be documented on the Pre-Timber Sale Checklist. Reasons for using alternative measures include situations where operational and economic considerations must be addressed and other techniques are used to reduce the visual impact of the clearcut. For example, if there is a small strip of timber next to a recent, large clearcut and selling this small strip of timber this year makes operational and economic sense, then the green-up requirement can potentially be waived if alternative measures are utilized to reach the performance measure (i.e. leave trees or other special measures).

The following are additional guidelines to consider:

1. The District Timber Management Specialist is the "go to" person to assist staff with conflict resolution regarding compliance with the green-up requirement. They will do quality checks when proposals are reviewed.
2. When unforeseen green-up conflicts occur in proposed management activities, staff can consider using an unplanned stand as a replacement for a planned stand. However, the appropriate approval process to change prescriptions must be followed.
3. Timber sale contracts are the unit of focus when reviewing green-up concerns. Therefore, group stands scheduled for clearcut into the same timber sale contract when possible. This will prevent a two clearcut stands located in the same sale from being in conflict with each other. This may be

considered even if the clearcut stands are in two different compartments or management units.

4. A buffer located between two clearcuts, where residual trees are greater than 10 sq. ft. basal area, will be adequate conformance providing there is a documented economic and/or operational need.
5. Two adjacent clearcuts will only be acceptable if there is documented economic or operational need and documented consideration of alternative measures.
6. A prescription could be approved at Compartment Review, but the treatment delayed until the green-up guideline has been met.
7. If a proposed clearcut is adjacent to a contract with a clearcut, that contract may not qualify for an extension or perhaps limit the extension so as not to conflict with the proposed treatment.